

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

GILES S. PORTER, M.D., Director

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EDITOR

Keeping Fit: The Gorgas Program of Personal Health

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FIRST PRIZE—Third Annual Gorgas Memorial Essay Contest

Never in the history of the world has health occupied so important a place in the minds of men as it does today. Disease is no longer considered a necessary evil. Health is now recognized as the normal condition of the body.

This subject is important because upon it depends the well-being of both the individual and the nation. Not only premature death, but also poverty and inefficiency are direct results of ill health. A large social agency found that 96 per cent of the families that it helped were forced to seek aid because of sickness or death. Statistics show that hundreds of thousands of lives are lost in the United States annually, due to preventable disease. Moreover, millions of dollars in earnings are lost each year because of unnecessary illness.

There are two ways of securing health; first, the cure of disease, and second, its prevention. The many victories already won in the battle against disease make scientists hopeful that the time is not far distant when the last menace will be overcome. Within a few short years after Pasteur demonstrated the germ theory, other scientists had succeeded in isolating the germs causing many wide-spread diseases; such as diphtheria, tuberculosis and malaria. In each case the discovery of the cause was closely followed by the finding of a cure or a method of control.

Further study revealed the agents largely responsible for carrying these germs to man. Some of these were found to be flies, rats and other insects and animals. In certain cases the recognition of a carrier was of great significance. In yellow fever, for instance, the knowledge that the germ was carried by the mosquito gave William Crawford Gorgas the key to the eradication of the disease. With his genius and perseverance the great sanitarian wiped out the mosquito and rid Havana, in seven months' time, of a disease that had been endemic for centuries. Later, by using the method so successful in Havana, General Gorgas stamped out yellow fever and malaria on the Isthmus and made possible the expeditious building of the Panama Canal.

The Gorgas Memorial Institute of Tropical and Preventive Medicine, which was established to honor the memory of this great man, is carrying on the work which he began. In its research laboratory at Panama much has been done in the past two years to aid the people of the world. Live stock diseases, such as trypanosomiasis of equines and cattle warble, have been studied. Monkey malaria and spirochaetosis in the wild monkey have also been under investigation, for it is believed that these diseases may be transmitted to man. Further research has been made into the study of malaria and its carrier, the anopheline

mosquito, and an extensive anti-mosquito campaign has been carried on in the United States to hasten the complete eradication of this disease.

The modern doctor is not satisfied with curing disease, but is greatly concerned with the problem of prevention. The preventive measures used are many and varied. The sanitation and vaccination have proved their worth so many times that they need not be discussed further. The eradication of disease carriers has also proved its value. But the most recent, and perhaps the most useful, of all preventive means is that of keeping the body in such an excellent state of health that it will be able to resist all germs. This can be accomplished through proper diet, exercise, rest, care of the teeth, and the annual or semiannual consultation of doctor and dentist.

Diet, a major factor in the science of keeping fit, should be chosen carefully. It should be regulated by the age and daily occupation of the individual. A child should have more body-building food than an adult, and a laborer more energy-giving food than one who leads a sedentary life. Fats and carbohydrates furnish energy, proteins build tissue, and vitamins regulate the body processes.

Many common ills are due to faulty elimination, which is usually the result of improper diet. A certain bulk of food must be eaten to insure proper and regular casting off of the waste products of the body. Vegetables are the foods relied upon to furnish this bulk. Fruits also are very valuable for regular elimination, and plenty of water is necessary in order that the kidneys may function properly in carrying off their share of the waste.

Exercise and rest hold a very prominent place in body care. Exercise serves two purposes—recreation and elimination. It revitalizes cramped and under-used muscles, bringing a glow and sparkle to cheeks and eyes. By causing the body to perspire, exercise throws off the fatigue poisons that collect in muscles and skin. Frequent bathing is necessary to prevent the reabsorption of these poisons.

Rest should never be neglected as it gives the body a chance to build up the broken down tissues. In some instances it is more beneficial than exercise. The speedy recovery from tuberculosis depends largely upon rest.

Care of the teeth is being stressed at the present time because physicians have come to realize the close connection between sound teeth and the general health of the body. A decayed tooth not only causes local disturbance, but may also pour into the blood stream poison that is capable of creating serious trouble in a remote part of the body. Defective teeth also impair digestion because the food is not properly

masticated. This allows it to enter the stomach in large particles improperly mixed with saliva. The admixture of saliva is necessary to the digestion, especially of starches.

It is shown, therefore, that care of the teeth is altogether necessary to healthful living. Brushing at least twice a day is a duty that must never be neglected. A thorough inspection should be given once or twice a year by the family dentist to discover and correct in their early stages any disorders.

The family physician should be consulted at least once a year for the same reason. He should give a complete physical examination and should begin immediately to remedy any defects. Serious trouble in later years may often be avoided by careful and regular inspection when one is young. Examination, however, should not be discontinued after a person is grown. It is fully as important to his long life and well-being then as when he was a child. We give our cars, our radios, and all other machinery a regular inspection to keep them in perfect condition. Certainly the wonderful mechanism of our bodies has a right to equal consideration. The importance to health of periodical health examinations must be impressed upon the people of America.

It is only recently that people have come to think of physical fitness as a moral responsibility. They must now be informed and convinced of the correct methods along this line of education. The Gorgas Memorial Institute is doing invaluable work along this line of education. It is publishing in the daily newspapers of the country articles upon personal health and common diseases, written by eminent medical men.

In all its activities, the Gorgas Memorial Institute is a most appropriate memorial to the great physician whom it honors. Founded upon his ideal of service to humanity, it is endeavoring to prevent and cure disease.

General Gorgas, through his untiring efforts on behalf of all mankind, proved himself a true citizen of the world. He was interested in the eradication of disease wherever it existed, and gave freely of his time and advice in assisting others to combat it. It is, indeed, to him that we owe the idea of building up bodily resistance as a protection against disease.

During the World War, when he was responsible for the welfare of five million men, Gorgas kept the army in a state of physical fitness previously unknown. This was effected through regular medical examination, vaccination, and other preventive measures. His marvelous success encourages others to believe that like measures would be equally effective if applied to the civil population. Since no one has the same authority over the civil population that

Gorgas had over the army, it is necessary to educate people to adopt health measures of their own accord. Through its constructive health program, the Gorgas Memorial Institute is aiding in this education and thus working for the good of all mankind.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY HAS SCHOOL OF SANITARY INSTRUCTION

In 1928, Dr. Ira V. Hiscock of Yale University and Mr. Harry F. Scoville of the Los Angeles County Civil Service Bureau made a survey of the Los Angeles County Health Department. They recommended among other things "the establishment of a training center where emphasis should be given to the educational aspects of the inspection problem." This idea was developed by Dr. J. L. Pomeroy, County Health Officer, and the plan of operation which was worked out included Dr. A. S. Baker as Dean and Mr. W. S. Mangold as Sanitary Instructor in a School of Sanitary Instruction. In the spring of 1930 courses were started at the East Side Health and Welfare Center with a class of 27 men. In the fall of the same year courses were given for the Chief District Sanitary Inspectors, 12 in number, and in the winter of 1931 more extensive courses were given to district chiefs. Arrangements were made with the American Red Cross to give their standard course of instruction in first aid to the injured. This course was given to the entire personnel in the Bureau of Inspections. While the instruction has not been continuous, work has been started upon a firm foundation and eventually all inspectors in the department will have received definite instruction especially designed for their advantage.

During the progress of the work the school has had the cooperation of the University of California, the Royal Sanitary Institute of England, the California State Department of Public Health, the United States Department of Agriculture, and various Los Angeles City and County departments, as well as the commercial organizations of the community.

JAMS AND JELLIES RECEIVE ATTENTION

Considerable attention was devoted to the jam and jelly industry, particularly in the southern part of the State, with the result that a number of brands have been relabeled to comply with the requirements of the law. A conference held in Los Angeles resulted in the organization of jam and jelly manufacturers for the specific purpose of cooperating with the Department of Public Health in matters concerning the proper labeling of their product as required by law.

CHECKING ACCURACY OF BIRTH RECORDS

Dr. Allen F. Gillihan, Health Officer of San Luis Obispo County, has adopted an effective method for checking the accuracy of birth certificates that may be filed in San Luis Obispo County. Shortly after the original certificate is received a special copy is made and submitted to the parents of the child. They are requested to correct any error that may be found in the record and to return the informal copy within three days to the county health office. Not all of these copies of certificates are mailed to the parents, however. Whenever possible the public health nurses on the staff take the copy of the birth certificate to the mother of the infant. This enables the nurse to provide any assistance that may be needed or to give any advice that may be required in the care of the child. Dr. Gillihan has found that this plan has many advantages, not only in determining the accuracy of the data on birth certificates, but it is also of great value in extending the services of the health department along lines of child hygiene and maternal welfare.

MUDDY WATER FROM THE SIERRAS

During May a deluge of complaints came to the Bureau of Sanitary Engineering relative to extremely muddy water in Newcastle, Rocklin, Roseville and Lincoln. The trouble was due to the resumption of placer mining near Dutch Flat, which could not be placed under control by the California Debris Commission for the reason that the reservoirs of the Nevada Irrigation District on Bear River caught the debris and kept it out of the main rivers. As a result of the complaints, the placer mining near Dutch Flat was stopped on the ground of pollution. At Roseville, where the water is coagulated and settled, a remarkable reduction in turbidity was maintained, but because the water was more clouded than usual complaints came from Roseville, as well as from other towns which receive the muddy water.

MORBIDITY*

Diphtheria.

21 cases of diphtheria have been reported, as follows: Berkeley 1, Fresno County 1, Fresno 1, Orland 3, Los Angeles County 1, Los Angeles 7, Sausalito 1, Merced 1, Orange County 2, Riverside County 2, Sacramento 1.

Scarlet Fever.

33 cases of scarlet fever have been reported, as follows: Oakland 2, Pittsburg 1, Fresno 4, Bakersfield 1, Los Angeles County 4, Alhambra 1, Long Beach 2, Los Angeles 1, Whittier 1, South Gate 2, Monterey County 2, San Joaquin 3, San

* From reports received on July 27th and 28th for week ending July 25th.

Luis Obispo 1, Lompoc 2, Santa Barbara 2, Santa Cruz County 1, Watsonville 1, Solano County 1, Porterville 1.

Measles.

148 cases of measles have been reported, as follows: Alameda 6, Berkeley 5, Hayward 1, Oakland 1, Colusa County 1, Contra Costa County 1, Fresno County 7, Fresno 2, Humboldt County 1, Arcata 1, Lassen County 1, Los Angeles County 1, Alhambra 1, Glendale 5, Inglewood 1, Long Beach 5, Los Angeles 20, Santa Monica 3, Whittier 1, Madera 2, Monterey County 1, Monterey 4, Fullerton 1, La Habra 2, Placentia 2, Plumas County 3, Riverside County 2, Sacramento 20, San Bernardino County 3, San Diego County 2, La Mesa 1, San Diego 8, San Francisco 17, Stockton 1, Tracy 1, Santa Barbara County 2, Santa Maria 1, Palo Alto 3, San Jose 2, Santa Cruz County 5, Vallejo 1.

Smallpox.

4 cases of smallpox have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 1, San Diego County 1, Sonoma County 2.

Typhoid Fever.

20 cases of typhoid fever have been reported, as follows: Imperial County 2, Imperial 1, Los Angeles County 1, Los Angeles 2, Madera County 1, Merced 1, Riverside County 1, Sacramento County 4, Sacramento 3, Needles 1, San Francisco 1, Santa Cruz County 1, California 1.**

Whooping Cough.

189 cases of whooping cough have been reported, as follows: Berkeley 14, Oakland 5, Martinez 3, Los Angeles County 20, Compton 1, Long Beach 3, Los Angeles 43, Manhattan 2, Pomona 1, Santa Monica 1, South Gate 1, Monterey Park 1,

Maywood 2, Anaheim 5, Santa Ana 13, Plumas County 4, Riverside 1, Sacramento 7, San Bernardino 2, San Diego 13, San Francisco 1, San Joaquin County 7, Stockton 4, Tracy 2, San Luis Obispo 10, Santa Barbara County 3, Santa Barbara 2, Santa Maria 2, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 7, Santa Cruz County 2, Sierra County 2, Etna 2, Woodland 2.

Meningitis (Epidemic).

2 cases of epidemic meningitis have been reported, as follows: Colusa 1, Sonoma County 1.

Poliomyelitis.

4 cases of poliomyelitis have been reported, as follows: Oakland 1, Kern County 1, Covina 1, Glendale 1.

Encephalitis (Epidemic).

Oakland reported one case of epidemic encephalitis.

Trichinosis.

Petaluma reported 5 cases of trichinosis.

Food Poisoning.

Los Angeles reported 9 cases of food poisoning.

Undulant Fever.

2 cases of undulant fever have been reported, as follows: Fullerton 1, Riverside 1.

Coccidioid Granuloma.

Santa Barbara reported one case of coccidioid granuloma.

** Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the State or those who contracted their illness traveling about the State throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTS

Disease	1931				1930			
	Week ending			Reports for week ending July 25 received by July 28	Week ending			Reports for week ending July 26 received by July 29
	July 4	July 11	July 18		July 5	July 12	July 19	
Actinomycosis	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Chickenpox	92	73	68	47	115	117	57	50
Coccidioid Granuloma	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Diphtheria	53	53	53	21	41	54	48	26
Dysentery (Amoebic)	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2
Dysentery (Bacillary)	3	1	4	4	5	11	2	1
Encephalitis (Epidemic)	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1
Erysipelas	7	16	13	9	15	12	12	11
Food Poisoning	26	37	1	9	0	6	0	34
German Measles	4	7	5	7	10	9	3	1
Gonococcus Infection	121	171	112	164	124	128	171	130
Hookworm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Influenza	19	9	8	14	22	18	21	11
Jaundice (Epidemic)	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Leprosy	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Malaria	0	2	2	4	1	0	1	5
Measles	288	242	159	148	687	572	336	181
Meningitis (Epidemic)	0	3	1	2	2	3	1	4
Mumps	79	70	50	53	169	177	163	96
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paratyphoid Fever	0	1	3	2	3	2	1	0
Pellagra	3	2	1	1	2	2	0	2
Pneumonia (Lobar)	23	30	24	18	23	26	20	16
Poliomyelitis	6	6	3	4	92	97	96	89
Rabies (Animal)	8	10	9	5	16	10	17	18
Rocky Mt. Spotted Fever	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	48	51	35	33	41	50	40	44
Smallpox	9	15	9	4	17	35	18	6
Syphilis	137	135	149	163	118	129	162	197
Tetanus	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
Trachoma	0	7	1	0	0	3	1	1
Trichinosis	1	0	0	5	0	3	0	0
Tuberculosis	253	198	173	186	194	211	157	172
Tularemia	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Typhoid Fever	13	13	16	20	12	22	18	32
Undulant Fever	1	2	3	2	3	3	3	0
Whooping Cough	144	170	170	189	141	115	168	128
Septic Sore Throat	1	4	2	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	1,341	1,330	1,076	1,117	1,858	1,818	1,519	1,264



Measles, chickenpox and scarlet fever have reached new low levels.

Whooping cough shows slight increases.

Food poisoning cases have been reported during the past few weeks.

Fortunately, poliomyelitis has shown no signs of becoming epidemic this season.

